

Coping with Stalking and Stalkers

[I. A Typology of Stalkers](#)

[II. The Erotomaniac Stalker](#)

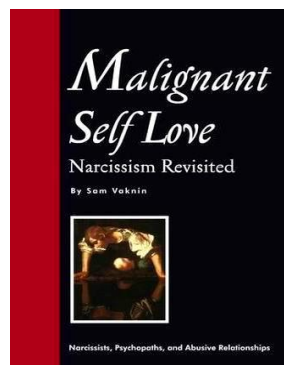
[III. The Narcissistic Stalker](#)

[IV. The Psychopathic Stalker](#)

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A Typology of Stalkers

Stalkers are not made of one cloth. Some of them are psychopaths, others are schizoids, narcissists, paranoids, or an admixture of these mental health disorders. Stalkers harass their victims because they are lonely, or because it is fun (these are latent sadists), or because they can't help it (clinging or co-dependent behaviour), or for a myriad different reasons.

Clearly, coping techniques suited to one type of stalker may backfire or prove to be futile with another. The only denominator common to all bullying stalkers is their pent-up rage. The stalker is angry at his or her targets and hates them. He perceives his victims as unnecessarily and churlishly frustrating. The aim of stalking is to "educate" the victim and to punish her.

Hence the catch-22 of [coping with stalkers](#):

The standard – and good – advice is to avoid all contact with your stalker, to ignore him, even as you take precautions. But being evaded only inflames the stalker's wrath and enhances his frustration. The more he feels sidelined and stonewalled, the more persistent he becomes, the more intrusive and the more aggressive.

It is essential, therefore, to first identify the type of abuser you are faced with.

(1) *The [Erotomaniac](#)*

This kind of stalker believes that he is in love with you and that, regardless of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the feeling is reciprocal (you are in love with him). He interprets everything you do (or refrain from doing) as [coded messages](#) confessing your eternal devotion to him and to your "relationship". Erotomaniacs are lonely, socially-inapt people. They may also be people with whom you have been involved romantically (e.g., your former spouse, a former boyfriend, a one night stand) – or otherwise (for instance, colleagues or co-workers).

Best coping strategy

Ignore the erotomaniac. Do not communicate with him or even acknowledge his existence. The erotomaniac clutches at straws and often suffers from [ideas of reference](#). He tends to blow out of proportion every comment or gesture of his "loved one". Avoid contact – do not talk to him, return his gifts unopened, refuse to discuss him with others, delete his correspondence.

(2) *The [Narcissist](#)*

Feels [entitled](#) to your time, attention, admiration, and resources. Interprets every rejection as an act of aggression which leads to a narcissistic injury. Reacts with

sustained [rage](#) and [vindictiveness](#). Can turn [violent](#) because he feels omnipotent and immune to the consequences of his actions.

Best [coping strategy](#)

Make clear that you want no further contact with him and that this decision is not personal. Be firm. Do not hesitate to inform him that you hold him responsible for his stalking, bullying, and harassment and that you will take all necessary steps to protect yourself. Narcissists are cowards and [easily intimidated](#). Luckily, they never get emotionally attached to their prey and so can move on with ease.

(3) *The [Paranoid](#)*

By far the most dangerous the lot. Lives in an inaccessible world of his own making. Cannot be reasoned with or cajoled. Thrives on threats, anxiety, and fear. Distorts every communication to feed his [persecutory delusions](#).

From the article "[Avoiding Your Paranoid Ex](#)":

"The paranoid's conduct is unpredictable and there is no 'typical scenario'. But experience shows that you can minimise the danger to yourself and to your household by taking some basic steps.

If at all possible, put as much physical distance as you can between yourself and the stalker. Change address, phone number, email accounts, cell phone number, enlist the kids in a new school, find a new job, get a new credit card, open a new bank account. Do not inform your paranoid ex about your whereabouts and your new life. You may have to make painful sacrifices, such as minimise contact with your family and friends.

Even with all these precautions, your abusive ex is likely to find you, furious that you have fled and evaded him, raging at your newfound existence, suspicious and resentful of your freedom and personal autonomy. [Violence](#) is more than likely. Unless deterred, paranoid former spouses tend to be harmful, even lethal.

Be prepared: alert your local law enforcement officers, check out your neighbourhood domestic violence shelter, consider owning a gun for self-defence (or, at the very least, a stun gun or mustard spray). Carry these with you at all times. Keep them close by and accessible even when you are asleep or in the bathroom.

Erotomaniac stalking can last many years. Do not let down your guard even if you haven't heard from him. Stalkers leave traces. They tend, for instance, to 'scout' the territory before they make their move. A typical stalker invades his or her victim's privacy a few times long before the crucial and injurious encounter.

Is your computer being tampered with? Is someone downloading your e-mail? Has anyone been to your house while you were away? Any signs of breaking and entering, missing things, atypical disorder (or too much order)? Is your post being delivered erratically, some

of the envelopes opened and then sealed? Mysterious phone calls abruptly disconnected when you pick up? Your stalker must have dropped by and is monitoring you.

Notice any unusual pattern, any strange event, any weird occurrence. Someone is driving by your house morning and evening? A new 'gardener' or maintenance man came by in your absence? Someone is making enquiries about you and your family? Maybe it's time to move on.

Teach your children to avoid your paranoid ex and to report to you immediately any contact he has made with them. Abusive bullies often strike where it hurts most – at one's kids. Explain the danger without being unduly alarming. Make a distinction between adults they can trust – and your abusive former spouse, whom they should avoid.

Ignore your gut reactions and impulses. Sometimes, the stress is so onerous and so infuriating that you feel like striking back at the stalker. Don't do it. Don't play his game. He is better at it than you are and is likely to defeat you. Instead, unleash the full force of the law whenever you get the chance to do so: restraining orders, spells in jail, and frequent visits from the police tend to check the abuser's violent and intrusive conduct.

The other behavioural extreme is equally futile and counterproductive. Do not try to buy peace by appeasing your abuser. Submissiveness and attempts to reason with him only whet the stalker's appetite. He regards both as contemptible weaknesses, vulnerabilities he can exploit. You cannot communicate with a paranoid because he is likely to distort everything you say to support his persecutory delusions, [sense of entitlement](#), and [grandiose fantasies](#). You cannot appeal to his emotions – he has none, at least not positive ones.

Remember: your abusive and paranoid former partner [blames it all on you](#). As far as he is concerned, you recklessly and unscrupulously wrecked a wonderful thing you both had going. He is vengeful, seething, and prone to bouts of uncontrolled and extreme aggression. Don't listen to those who tell you to 'take it easy'. Hundreds of thousands of women paid with their lives for heeding this advice. Your paranoid stalker is inordinately dangerous – and, more likely than not, he is with you for a long time to come."

(4) [The Antisocial \(Psychopath\)](#)

Though ruthless and, typically, violent, the psychopath is a calculating machine, out to maximise his gratification and personal profit. Psychopaths lack empathy and may even be sadistic – but understand well and instantly the language of carrots and sticks.

(continued below)

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Best coping strategy

Convince your psychopath that messing with your life or with your nearest is going to cost him dearly. Do not threaten him. Simply, be unequivocal about your desire to be left in peace and your intentions to involve the Law should he stalk, harass, or threaten you. Give him a choice between being left alone and becoming the target of multiple arrests, restraining orders, and worse. Take extreme precautions at all times and meet him only in public places.

[The Erotomaniac](#)

This kind of stalker believes that he is in love with you. To show his keen interest, he keeps calling you, dropping by, writing e-mails, doing unsolicited errands "on your behalf", talking to your friends, co-workers, and family, and, in general, making himself available at all times. The erotomaniac feels free to make for you legal, financial, and emotional decisions and to commit you without your express consent or even knowledge.

The erotomaniac intrudes on your privacy, does not respect your express wishes and personal boundaries and ignores your emotions, needs, and preferences. To him – or her – "love" means enmeshment and clinging coupled with an overpowering separation anxiety (fear of being abandoned). He or she may even force himself (or herself) upon you sexually.

Moreover, no amount of denials, chastising, threats, and even outright hostile actions will convince the erotomaniac that you are not in love with him. He knows better and will make you see the light as well. You are simply unaware of what is good for you, divorced as you are from your emotions. The erotomaniac determinedly sees it as his or her task to bring life and happiness into your dreary existence.

Thus, regardless of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the erotomaniac is convinced that his or her feelings are reciprocated – in other words, that you are equally in love with him or her. The erotomaniac stalker interprets everything you

do (or refrain from doing) as [coded messages](#) confessing to and conveying your eternal devotion to him and to your "relationship".

Erotomaniacs are socially-inapt, awkward, [schizoid](#), and suffer from a host of mood and anxiety disorders. They may also be people with whom you have been involved romantically (e.g., your former spouse, a former boyfriend, a one night stand) – or otherwise (for instance, colleagues or co-workers). They are driven by their all-consuming loneliness and all-pervasive fantasies.

Consequently, erotomaniacs react badly to any perceived rejection by their victims. They turn on a dime and become dangerously [vindictive](#), out to destroy the source of their mounting frustration – you. When the "relationship" looks hopeless, many erotomaniacs turn to violence in a spree of self-destruction.

Best coping strategy

Ignore the erotomaniac. Do not communicate with him or even acknowledge his existence. The erotomaniac clutches at straws and often suffers from [ideas of reference](#). He tends to blow out of proportion every comment or gesture of his "loved one".

Follow these behaviour tips – the No Contact Policy:

- With the exception of the minimum mandated by the courts – decline any and all **GRATUITOUS** contact with your stalker;
- Do not respond to his pleading, romantic, nostalgic, flattering, or threatening e-mail messages;
- Return all gifts he sends you;
- Refuse him entry to your premises. Do not even respond to the intercom;
- Do not talk to him on the phone. Hang up the minute you hear his voice while making clear to him, in a single, polite but firm, sentence, that you are determined not to talk to him;
- Do not answer his letters;
- Do not visit him on special occasions, or in emergencies;
- Do not respond to questions, requests, or pleas forwarded to you through third parties;
- Disconnect from third parties whom you know are spying on you at his behest;

- Do not discuss him with your children;
 - Do not gossip about him;
 - Do not ask him for anything, even if you are in dire need;
 - When you are forced to meet him, do not discuss your personal affairs – or his;
 - Relegate any inevitable contact with him – when and where possible – to professionals: your lawyer, or your accountant.
-

The Narcissist

Feels [entitled](#) to your time, attention, admiration, and resources. Interprets every rejection as an act of aggression which leads to a narcissistic injury. Reacts with sustained [rage](#) and [vindictiveness](#). Can turn [violent](#) because he feels omnipotent and immune to the consequences of his actions.

Best coping strategy

Make clear that you want no further contact with him and that this decision is not personal. Be firm. Do not hesitate to inform him that you hold him responsible for his stalking, bullying, and harassment and that you will take all necessary steps to protect yourself. Narcissists are cowards and [easily intimidated](#). Luckily, they never get emotionally attached to their prey and so can move on with ease.

Other coping strategies

I. Frighten Him

Narcissists live in a state of constant rage, repressed aggression, envy and hatred. They firmly believe that everyone else is precisely like them. As a result, they are paranoid, suspicious, scared, labile, and unpredictable. Frightening the narcissist is a powerful behaviour modification tool. If sufficiently deterred – the narcissist promptly disengages, gives up everything he fought for and sometimes makes amends.

To act effectively, one has to identify the vulnerabilities and susceptibilities of the narcissist and strike repeated, escalating blows at them – until the narcissist lets go and vanishes.

Example: If a narcissist has a secret – one should use this fact to threaten him. One should drop cryptic hints that there are mysterious witnesses to the events and recently revealed evidence.

The narcissist has a very vivid imagination. Most of the drama takes place in the paranoid mind of the narcissist. His imagination runs amok. He finds himself snarled by horrifying scenarios, pursued by the vilest "certainties". The narcissist is his own worst persecutor and prosecutor. Let his imagination do the rest.

You don't have to do much except utter a vague reference, make an ominous allusion, delineate a possible turn of events. The narcissist will do the rest for you. He is like a small child in the dark, generating the very monsters that paralyse him with fear.

The narcissist may have been involved in tax evasion, in malpractice, in child abuse, in infidelity – there are so many possibilities, which offer a rich vein of attack. If done cleverly, noncommittally, gradually, and increasingly, the narcissist crumbles, disengages and disappears. He lowers his profile thoroughly in the hope of avoiding hurt and pain.

Many narcissists have been known to disown and abandon their whole life in response to a well-focused (and impeccably legal) campaign by their victims. They relocate, establish a new family, find another job, abandon a field of professional interest, avoid friends and acquaintances, even change their names.

I want to emphasise that all these activities have to be pursued legally, preferably through the good services of law offices and in broad daylight. If done the wrong way, they might constitute extortion or blackmail, harassment and a host of other criminal offences.

II. Lure Him

Another way to neutralise the narcissist is to offer him continued [Narcissistic Supply](#) until the war is over and won by you. Dazzled by the drug of Narcissistic Supply, the narcissist immediately becomes docile and tamed, forgets his vindictiveness and triumphantly re-possesses his "property" and "territory".

Under the influence of Narcissistic Supply, the narcissist is unable to tell when he is being [manipulated](#). He is blind, dumb and deaf. You can make a narcissist do anything by offering, withholding, or threatening to withhold Narcissistic Supply (adulation, admiration, attention, sex, awe, subservience, etc.).

III. Threaten Him with Abandonment

The threat to abandon need not be explicit or conditional ("If you don't do something or if you do it – I will ditch you"). It is sufficient to [confront](#) the

narcissist, to completely ignore him, to insist on respect for one's boundaries and wishes, or to shout back at him. The narcissist takes these signs of personal autonomy to be harbinger of impending separation and reacts with anxiety.

The narcissist is a living emotional pendulum. If he gets too close to someone emotionally, if he becomes intimate with someone, he fears ultimate and inevitable abandonment. He, thus, immediately distances himself, acts cruelly and brings about the very abandonment that he feared in the first place. This is called the Approach-Avoidance Repetition Complex.

In this paradox lies the key to coping with the narcissist. If, for instance, he is having a [rage attack](#) – rage back. This will provoke in him fears of being abandoned and calm him down instantaneously (and eerily).

Mirror the narcissist's actions and repeat his words. If he threatens – threaten back and credibly try to use the same language and content. If he leaves the house – do the same, disappear on him. If he is suspicious – act suspicious. Be critical, denigrating, humiliating, go down to his level – because that's the only way to penetrate his thick defences. Faced with his mirror image – the narcissist always recoils.

You will find that if you mirror him consistently and constantly, the narcissist becomes obsequious and tries to make amends, moving from one (cold and bitter, cynical and misanthropic, cruel and sadistic) pole to another (warm, even loving, fuzzy, engulfing, emotional, maudlin, and saccharine).

IV. Manipulate Him

By playing on the narcissist's grandiosity and paranoia, it is possible to deceive and manipulate him effortlessly. Just offer him [Narcissistic Supply](#) – admiration, affirmation, adulation – and he is yours. Harp on his insecurities and his persecutory delusions – and he is likely to trust only you and cling to you for dear life.

(continued below)

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But be careful not to overdo it! When asked how is the narcissist likely to react to continued mistreatment, I wrote this in one of my [Pathological Narcissism FAQs](#):

"The initial reaction of the narcissist to a perceived humiliation is a conscious rejection of the humiliating input. The narcissist tries to ignore it, talk it out of existence, or belittle its importance. If this crude mechanism of cognitive dissonance fails, the narcissist resorts to denial and repression of the humiliating material. He 'forgets' all about it, gets it out of his mind and, when reminded of it, denies it.

But these are usually merely stopgap measures. The disturbing data is bound to impinge on the narcissist's tormented consciousness. Once aware of its re-emergence, the narcissist uses fantasy to counteract and counterbalance it. He imagines all the horrible things that he would have done (or will do) to the sources of his frustration.

It is through fantasy that the narcissist seeks to redeem his pride and dignity and to re-establish his damaged sense of uniqueness and grandiosity. Paradoxically, the narcissist does not mind being humiliated if this were to make him more unique or to draw more attention to his person.

For instance: if the injustice involved in the process of humiliation is unprecedented, or if the humiliating acts or words place the narcissist in a unique position, or if they transform him into a public figure – the narcissist tries to encourage such behaviours and to elicit them from others.

In this case, he fantasises how he defiantly demeans and debases his opponents by forcing them to behave even more barbarously than before, so that their unjust conduct is universally recognised as such and condemned and the narcissist is publicly vindicated and his self-respect restored. In short: martyrdom is as good a method of obtaining [Narcissist Supply](#) as any.

Fantasy, though, has its limits and once reached, the narcissist is likely to experience waves of self-hatred and self-loathing, the outcomes of helplessness and of realising the depths of his dependence on Narcissistic Supply. These feelings culminate in severe self-directed aggression: depression, [destructive, self-defeating behaviours](#) or suicidal ideation.

These self-negating reactions, inevitably and naturally, terrify the narcissist. He tries to project them on to his environment. He may decompensate by developing obsessive-compulsive traits or by going through a psychotic microepisode.

At this stage, the narcissist is suddenly besieged by disturbing, uncontrollable violent thoughts. He develops ritualistic reactions to them: a sequence of motions, an act, or obsessive counter-thoughts. Or he might visualise his aggression, or experience auditory hallucinations. Humiliation affects the narcissist this deeply.

Luckily, the process is entirely reversible once Narcissistic Supply is resumed. Almost immediately, the narcissist swings from one pole to another, from being humiliated to being elated, from being put down to being reinstated, from being at the bottom of his own, imagined, pit to occupying the top of his own, imagined, hill."

What if I Want to Continue the Relationship?

FIVE DON'T DO'S
How to Avoid the Wrath of the Narcissist

- Never disagree with the narcissist or contradict him;
- Never offer him any intimacy;
- Look awed by whatever attribute matters to him (for instance: by his professional achievements or by his good looks, or by his success with women and so on);
- Never remind him of life out there and if you do, connect it somehow to his sense of grandiosity;
- Do not make any comment, which might directly or indirectly impinge on his self-image, omnipotence, judgement, omniscience, skills, capabilities, professional record, or even omnipresence. Bad sentences start with: "I think you overlooked ... made a mistake here ... you don't know ... do you know ... you were not here yesterday so ... you cannot ... you should ... (perceived as rude imposition, narcissists react very badly to restrictions placed on their freedom) ... I (never mention the fact that you are a separate, independent entity, narcissists regard others as extensions of their selves, their internalisation processes were screwed up and they did not differentiate properly)..." You get the gist of it.

The TEN DO'S
How to Make Your Narcissist Dependent on You
If you INSIST on Staying with Him

- Listen attentively to everything the narcissist says and agree with it all. [Don't believe a word of it](#) but let it slide as if everything is just fine, business as usual;
- Personally offer something absolutely unique to the narcissist which they cannot obtain anywhere else. Also be prepared to line up future Sources of Primary [Narcissistic Supply](#) for your narcissist because you will not be **IT** for very long, if at all. If you take over the procuring function for the

narcissist, they become that much more dependent on you which makes it a bit tougher for them to pull their haughty stuff – an inevitability, in any case;

- Be endlessly patient and go way out of your way to be accommodating, thus keeping the Narcissistic Supply flowing liberally, and keeping the peace (relatively speaking);
- Be endlessly giving. This one may not be attractive to you, but it is a take it or leave it proposition;
- Be absolutely emotionally and financially independent of the narcissist. Take what you need: the excitement and engulfment and refuse to get upset or hurt when the narcissist does or says something dumb, rude, or insensitive. [Yelling back](#) works really well but should be reserved for special occasions when you fear your narcissist may be on the verge of leaving you; the [silent treatment](#) is better as an ordinary response, but it must be carried out without any emotional content, more with the air of boredom and "I'll talk to you later, when I am good and ready, and when you are behaving in a more reasonable fashion";
- If your narcissist is cerebral and **NOT** interested in having much sex – then give yourself ample permission to have "hidden" sex with other people. Your cerebral narcissist will not be indifferent to infidelity so discretion and secrecy is of paramount importance;
- If your narcissist is somatic and you don't mind, join in on group sex encounters but make sure that you choose properly for your narcissist. They are heedless and very indiscriminating in respect of sexual partners and that can get very problematic (STDs and blackmail come to mind);
- If you are a "fixer", then focus on fixing situations, preferably before they become "situations". Don't for one moment delude yourself that you can **FIX** the narcissist – it simply will not happen. Not because they are being stubborn – they just simply can't be fixed;
- If there is any fixing that can be done, it is to help your narcissist become aware of their condition, and this is **VERY IMPORTANT**, with no negative implications or accusations in the process at all. It is like living with a physically handicapped person and being able to discuss, calmly, unemotionally, what the [limitations and benefits of the handicap](#) are and how the two of you can work with these factors, rather than trying to change them;
- Finally, and most important of all: **KNOW YOURSELF**. What are you getting from the relationship? Are you actually a masochist?

A [co-dependent](#) perhaps? Why is this relationship attractive and interesting? Define for yourself what good and beneficial things you believe you are receiving in this relationship.

Define the things that you find harmful **TO YOU**. Develop strategies to minimise the harm to yourself. Don't expect that you will cognitively be able to reason with the narcissist to change who they are. You may have some limited success in getting your narcissist to tone down on the really harmful behaviours **THAT AFFECT YOU**. This can only be accomplished in a very trusting, frank and open relationship.

[**The Psychopath \(Antisocial\)**](#)

Stalking is a crime and stalkers are criminals. This simple truth is often ignored by mental health practitioners, by law enforcement agencies, and by the media. The horrid consequences of stalking are often underestimated and stalkers are mocked as eccentric and lonely weirdoes. Yet, stalking affects one fifth of all women and an unknown number of men – and often ends in violence and bloodshed.

A 1997 Review Paper titled "*Stalking (Part I) An Overview of the Problem*", Karen M. Abrams, MD, FRCPC1, Gail Erlick Robinson, MD, DPsych, FRCPC2, define stalking thus:

"Stalking, or criminal harassment, is defined as the 'wilful, malicious, and repeated following or harassing of another person', usually requiring a 'credible threat of violence' against the victim or the victim's family (1). 'Harass' refers to wilful conduct directed at a person that seriously alarms, annoys, or distresses the person and which serves no legitimate purpose (2). Typically, the behaviour involves such things as loitering near the victim, approaching, making multiple phone calls, constantly surveilling, harassing the victim's employer or children, harming a pet, interfering with personal property, sabotaging dates, and sending threatening or sexually suggestive 'gifts' or letters. The harassment usually escalates, often beginning with phone calls that gradually become more threatening and aggressive in nature, and frequently ends in violent acts (3). In essence, the offender's behaviour is terrorising, intimidating, and threatening, and restricts the freedom of and controls the victim.

In the US, there are individual state laws but no unified federal antistalking laws. Under the Criminal Code of Canada, it is a crime to knowingly or recklessly harass another person in any of the following ways: (1) by repeatedly following or communicating either directly or indirectly with that person or anyone known to them; (2) by watching where that person or anyone known to them resides, works, or happens to be; or (3) by engaging in any threatening conduct directed at that person or his or her family, if any of these cause the person to reasonably fear for his or her safety. In both the US and Canada, antistalking laws are in a state of flux."

Many criminals suffer from personality disorders – most prevalently, the Antisocial Personality Disorder, formerly known as "psychopathy". Co-morbidity – a "cocktail" of mental health disorders – is frequent. Most stalkers abuse substances (alcohol, drugs) and are prone to violence or other forms of aggression.

APD or AsPD was formerly called "psychopathy" or, more colloquially, "sociopathy". Some scholars, such as Robert Hare, still distinguish psychopathy from mere antisocial behaviour. The disorder appears in early adolescence but criminal behaviour and substance abuse often abate with age, usually by the fourth or fifth decade of life. It may have a genetic or hereditary determinant and afflicts mainly men. The diagnosis is controversial and regarded by some scholar as scientifically unfounded.

Psychopaths regard other people as objects to be manipulated and instruments of gratification and utility. They have no discernible conscience, are devoid of empathy and find it difficult to perceive other people's nonverbal cues, needs, emotions, and preferences. Consequently, the psychopath rejects other people's rights and his commensurate obligations. He is impulsive, reckless, irresponsible and unable to postpone gratification. He often rationalises his behaviour showing an utter absence of remorse for hurting or defrauding others.

(continued below)

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Their (primitive) defence mechanisms include splitting (they view the world – and people in it – as "all good" or "all evil"), projection (attribute their own shortcomings unto others) and Projective Identification (force others to behave the way they expect them to).

The psychopath fails to comply with social norms. Hence the criminal acts, the deceitfulness and identity theft, the use of aliases, the constant lying, and the

conning of even his nearest and dearest for gain or pleasure. Psychopaths are unreliable and do not honour their undertakings, obligations, contracts, and responsibilities. They rarely hold a job for long or repay their debts. They are vindictive, remorseless, ruthless, driven, dangerous, aggressive, violent, irritable, and, sometimes, prone to magical thinking. They seldom plan for the long and medium terms, believing themselves to be immune to the consequences of their own actions.

Many psychopaths are outright [bullies](#). Michigan psychologist Donald B. Saunders distinguishes between three types of aggressors: "family-only", "generally violent" (most likely to suffer from APD), and the "emotionally volatile". In an interview to [Psychology Today](#), he described the "generally Violent" thus:

"Type 2 men – the generally violent – use violence outside the home as well as in it. Their violence is severe and tied to alcohol; they have high rates of arrest for drunk driving and violence. Most have been abused as children and have rigid attitudes about sex roles. These men, Saunders explains, are calculating; they have a history with the criminal justice system and know what they can get away with."

Bullies feel inadequate and compensates for it by being violent – verbally, psychologically, or physically. Some bullies suffer from personality and other mental health disorders. They feel entitled to special treatment, seek attention, lack empathy, are rageful and envious, and exploit and then discard their co-workers.

Bullies are insincere, haughty, unreliable, and lack empathy and sensitivity to the emotions, needs, and preferences of others whom they regard and treat as objects or instruments of gratification.

Bullies are ruthless, cold, and have alloplastic defences (and outside locus of control) – they blame others for their failures, defeats, or misfortunes. Bullies have low frustration and tolerance thresholds, get bored and anxious easily, are violently impatient, emotionally labile, unstable, erratic, and untrustworthy. They lack self-discipline, are egotistic, exploitative, rapacious, opportunistic, driven, reckless, and callous.

Bullies are emotionally immature and control freaks. They are consummate liars and deceptively charming. Bullies dress, talk, and behave normally. Many of them are persuasive, manipulative, or even charismatic. They are socially adept, liked, and often fun to be around and the centre of attention. Only a prolonged and intensive interaction with them – sometimes as a victim – exposes their dysfunctions.

Though ruthless and, typically, violent, the psychopath is a calculating machine, out to maximise his gratification and personal profit. Psychopaths lack empathy and may even be sadistic – but understand well and instantly the language of carrots and sticks.

Best coping strategy

- Convince your psychopath that messing with your life or with your nearest is going to cost him dearly;
- Do not threaten him. Simply, be unequivocal and firm about your desire to be left in peace and your intentions to involve the Law should he stalk, harass, or threaten you;
- Give him a choice between being left alone and becoming the target of multiple arrests, restraining orders, and worse;
- Take extreme precautions at all times and meet him accompanied by someone and in public places – and only if you have no other choice;
- Minimise contact and interact with him through professionals (lawyers, accountants, therapists, police officers, judges);
- Document every contact, every conversation, try to commit everything to writing. You may need it as evidence;
- Educate your children to be on their guard and to exercise caution and good judgement;
- Keep fully posted and updated your local law enforcement agencies, your friends, the media, and anyone else who would listen;
- Be careful with your personal information. Provide only the bare and necessary minimum. Remember: he has ways of finding out;
- Under no circumstances succumb to his romantic advances, accept his gifts, respond to personal communications, show interest in his affairs, help him out, or send him messages directly or through third parties. Maintain the No Contact rule;
- Equally, do not seek revenge. Do not provoke him, "punish him", taunt him, disparage him, bad-mouth or gossip about him or your relationship.

How to get help in coping with stalkers and paranoid former spouses or relatives is the subject of the [next article](#).

[Continue ...](#)

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[*Surviving the Narcissist*](#)

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[*The Victims of the Narcissist*](#)

[*Traumas as Social Interactions*](#)

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[*How to Spot an Abuser on Your First Date*](#)

"Trauma Bonding" and the [Psychology of Torture](#)

[*Narcissists, Narcissistic Supply and Sources of Supply*](#)

[*Other People's Pain \(Narcissism, Sadism, and Masochism\)*](#)

[*The Malignant Optimism of the Abused \(Victims of Narcissists\)*](#)

[*The Toxic Relationships Study List*](#)

RESOURCES

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